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(54) Document case

(57) A filing receptacle 1 has an upper part 2 swingable from a closed to an open position downwardly and forwardly about a pivotal axis provided by pins 3, to thereby open the case. Front wall 4 is pivotable from a first, closed position to a second, outwardly inclined position, in order to display the file contents. Receptacle 1 is made from steel and plastics and filing folders 5 have hooks 6 which engage telescopic suspension rails 7.

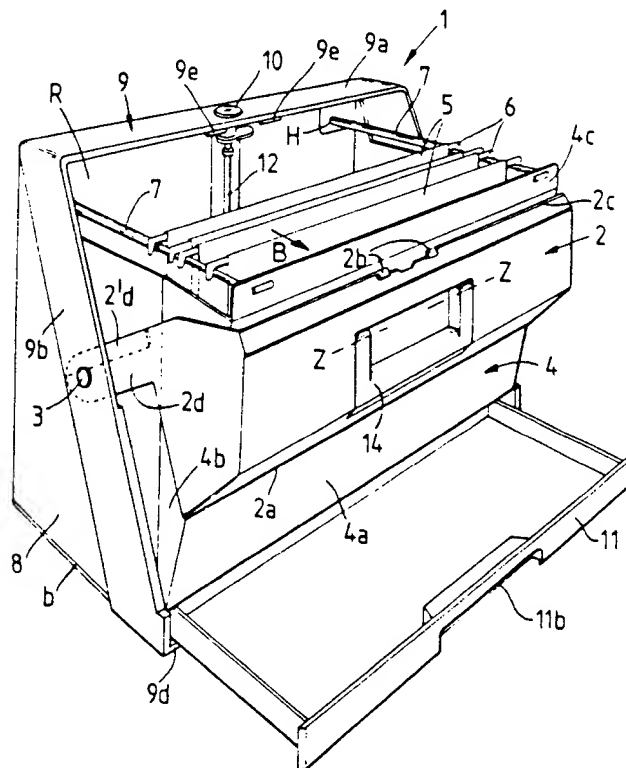


FIG. 2.

The claims were filed later than the filing date within the period prescribed by Rule 25(1) of the Patents Rules 1982.

This print takes account of replacement documents submitted after the date of filing to enable the application to comply with the formal requirements of the Patents Rules 1982.

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FIG. 1.

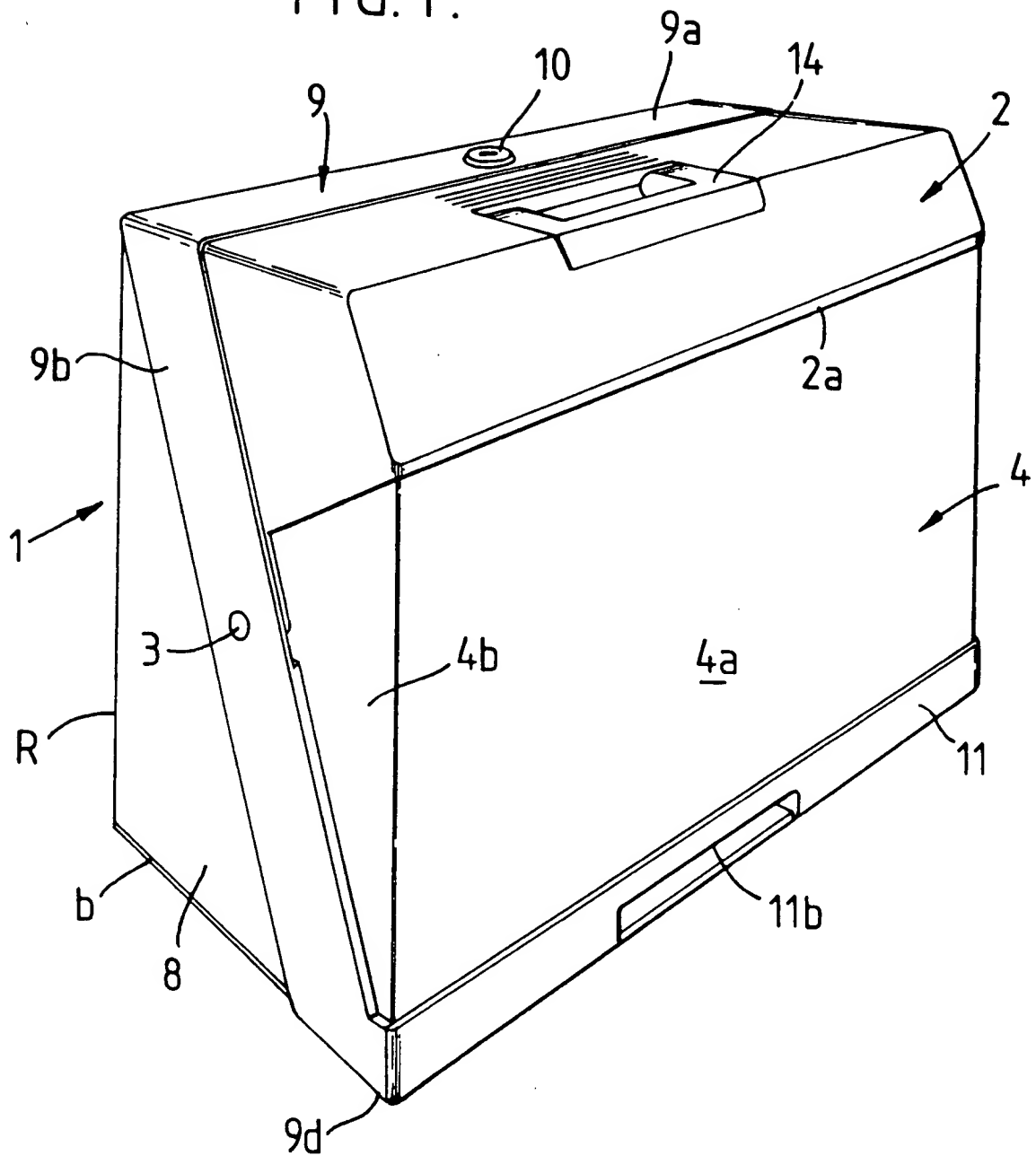
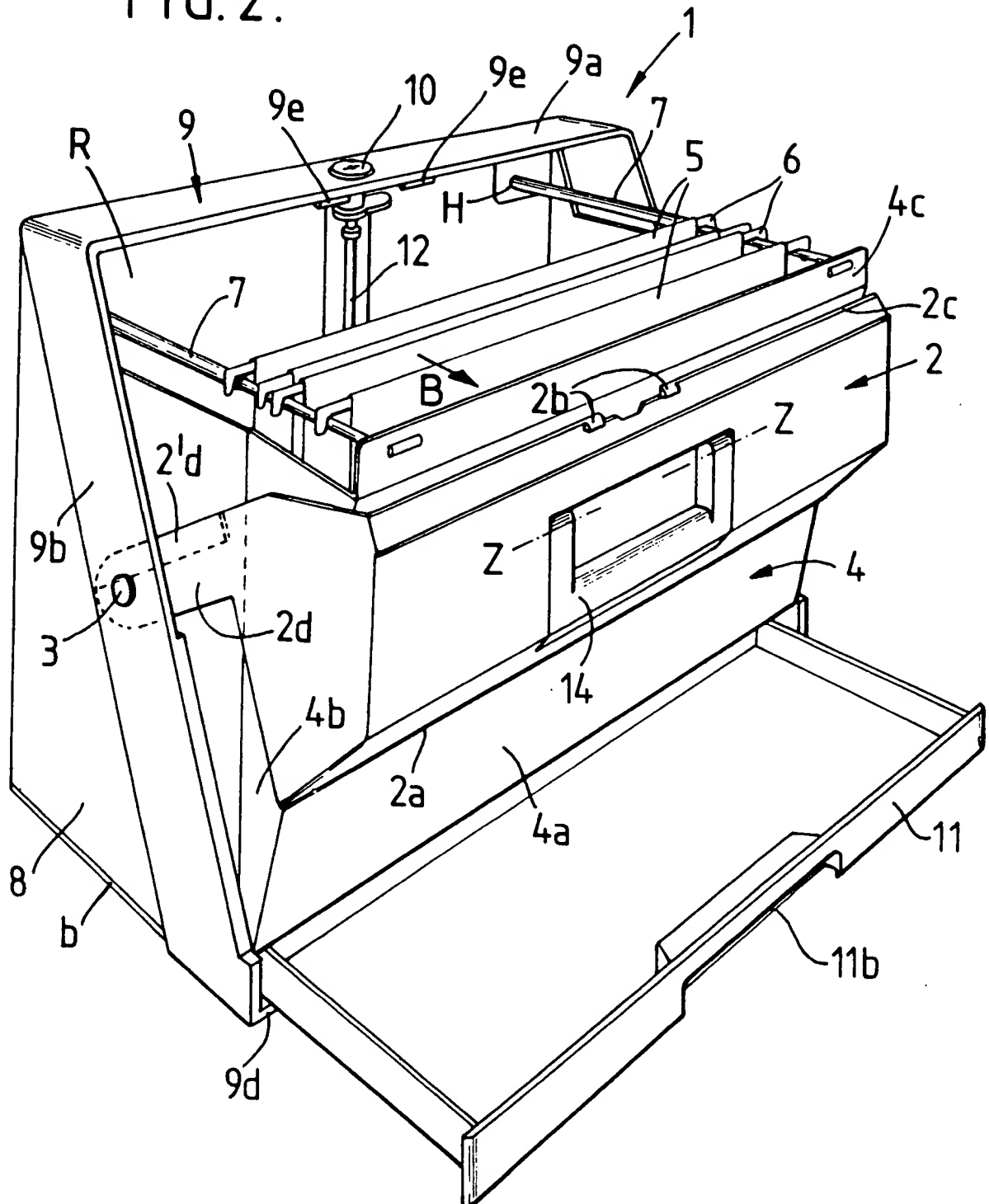


FIG. 2.



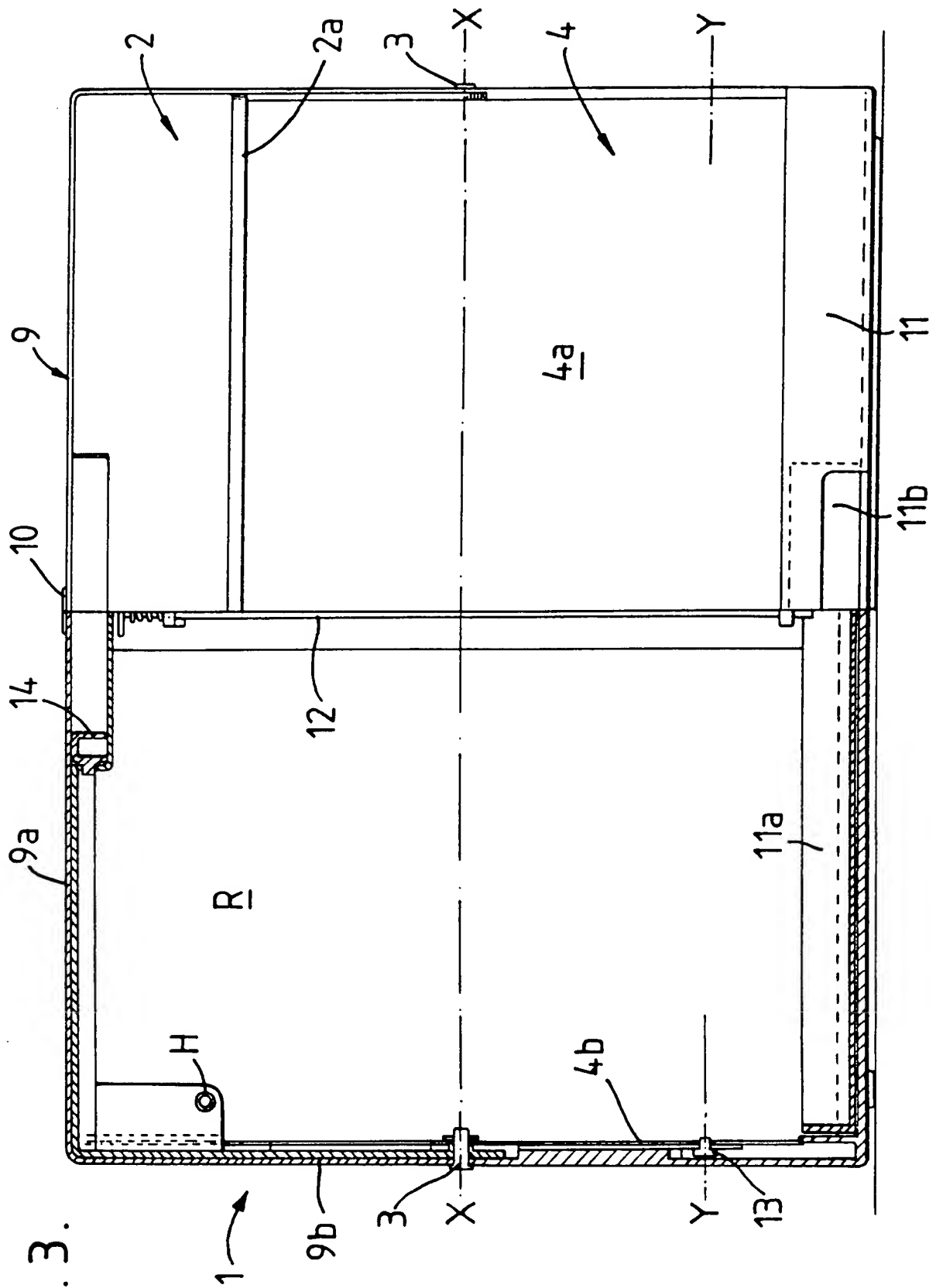
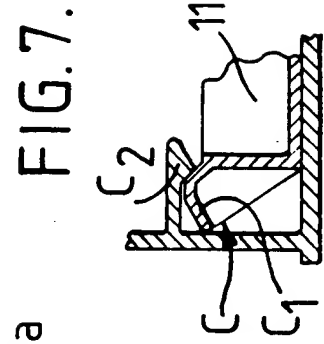
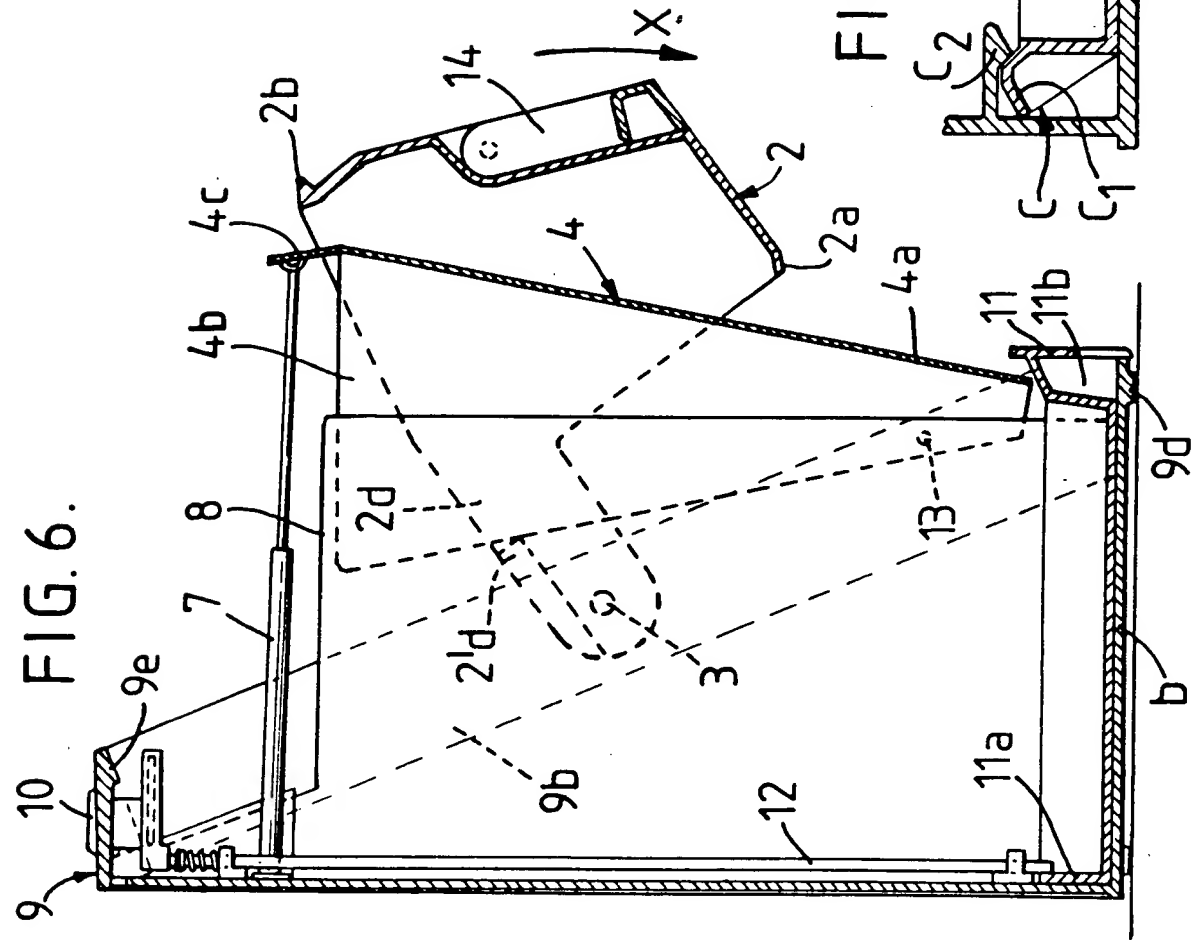
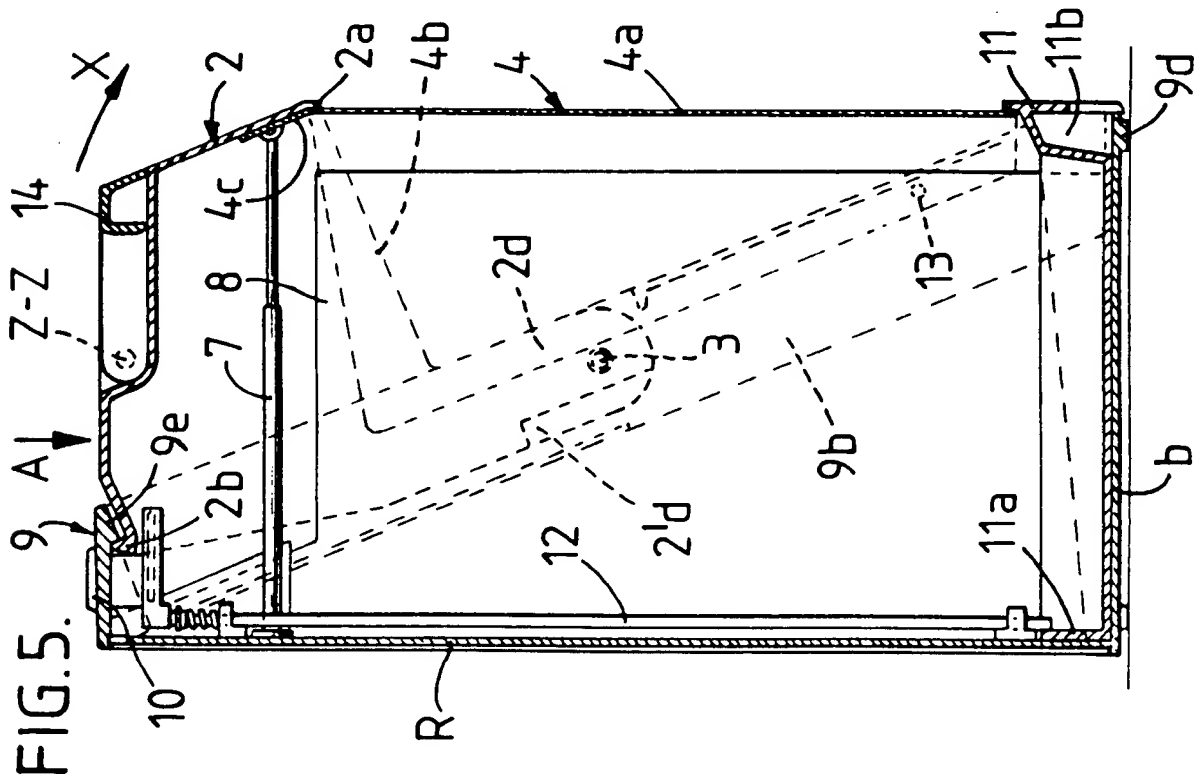


FIG. 3.



DOCUMENT CASE

This invention relates to a document case and is more particularly but not exclusively concerned with a portable filing receptacle.

Many different designs of document cases and filing receptacles have been previously proposed but it is believed that many of these designs tend to be disadvantageous in some respect or another related to, e.g. costs and ease of production, maximum utilisation of available space, sufficient and easy access to, and display of the contents of, the case/receptacle.

It is an object of the present invention to provide a document case which is improved in at least some respect or which at least alleviates one or more of the aforementioned, or other known, problems.

According to the present invention there is provided a document case comprising an upper part swingable, from a closed position, downwardly and forwardly relative to a front wall of the case, to thereby open the case, the arrangement being such that said front wall is pivotable from a first position occupied when the case is closed to a second, outwardly inclined position, in order, in use, to display the contents of the case, when the case is open.

Preferably, the arrangement is such that the front wall is pivoted to said second position as said upper part is swung to open the case and/or said upper part may be arranged to support the front wall in said second position (or other inclined position). Said upper part may be arranged to limit the angle of inclination of the front wall.

In one embodiment of the present invention, the upper part comprises a canopy with two opposed side arms pivotally mounted on the case, said arms being provided with actuating portions which urge the front wall to an angle of inclination dependent upon the angle turned through by the upper part as it is swung downwardly and forwardly. Said front wall may comprise a front panel and tapered wing panels overlapping and parallel to side walls of the case, and engaged by associated actuating portions (as aforementioned) as the case is opened. Said actuating portions may comprise integral portions of the side arms which engage associated edges of the wing panels to push them outwardly as the case is opened. The arrangement is, preferably, such that the upper part may be turned until a bottom edge thereof engages the front wall to act as a stop to the angle of inclination thereof. The wing panels may be hingedly connected to the side walls towards the bottom thereof.

The case may be a filing receptacle and most preferably, in such an instance, rail means usually in the form of telescopic rails may be provided for a suspension filing system within the case and where the front wall is pivoted as the case is opened, the telescopic rails (or other rail means) are also thereby extended. The rails may be attached to the front wall.

The case may be provided with a drawer, preferably, at the bottom thereof. Said drawer may be lockable in a closed position in the case.

The case may be provided with a lock (preferably a key-operated lock) and actuation of the lock may unlock the drawer in addition to unlocking the case (preferably on a common action of the lock).

Many other advantageous features will be apparent from the following description and drawings.

Still further according to the present invention there is provided a filing receptacle comprising a hinged upper part movable between closed and open positions, said upper part being arranged to extend rail means (preferably telescopic suspension rails), for supporting files thereon, as said upper part is moved between the open and closed positions in order to display the files, said receptacle having a pivotable front wall movable

from a first position generally parallel with a rear wall of the receptacle to an inclined position on said movement of the upper part from said closed position to said open position, said upper part being movable relative to the front wall.

An embodiment of a document case in accordance with the present invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:-

FIGURE 1 shows a perspective view of the case in a closed position;

FIGURE 2 shows a perspective view of the case in an open position and with a drawer of the case also in an open position;

FIGURE 3 shows a half-sectional front view of the case;

FIGURE 4 shows a part-sectional top view of the case;

FIGURE 5 shows a sectional side view of the case in the closed position;

FIGURE 6 shows a sectional side view of the case in a partly open position; and

FIGURE 7 shows an enlarged detail of a possible modification to the case.

Referring to the FIGURES of the drawings, a document case 1 in the form of a filing receptacle has an upper part or lid 2 swingable from a closed position (see FIGURE 1) to an open position (see FIGURE 2) downwardly and forwardly about a pivotal axis X-X (see FIGURE 3) provided by axially aligned pivot pins 3 (only one shown in the FIGURES), to thereby open the case.

The case 1 has a front wall 4 pivotable from a first position occupied when the case is closed (see FIGURE 1 in which said front wall is parallel to a rear wall R of the case) to a second, outwardly inclined position, as shown in FIGURE 2, in order to display the contents (namely suspended filing folders 5 with files - not shown) of the case, when the case is open (FIGURE 2).

The case 1 is constructed from steel and plastics and the filing folders 5 have hooks 6 which engage rail means in the form of telescopic suspension rails 7. The arrangement is such that as the case 1 is opened the downward and forward swinging movement of the upper part 2 automatically moves the front wall to the inclined position (see FIGURES 2 and 6) and simultaneously extends the telescopic extension rails 7.

As shown in FIGURE 2, the lower edge 2a engages the front wall 4 to act as a stop to limit the angle of inclination of the front wall.

As aforementioned, the case 1 is of a plastics and steel construction. The front wall 4, rear wall 5, side walls 8 and bottom wall b are of steel. The case 1 also has a rigid plastics integral frame member 9, comprising a horizontal, rearward, top strip 9a bridging two, opposed vertical side strips 9b extending diagonally of respective side walls 8. The side strips 9b extend downwardly and are joined by a horizontal, frontward, bottom strip 9d extending along the bottom of the case 1. Alternatively, the frame member 9 could be integrally moulded with the rear wall R and bottom wall b (as depicted in FIGURES 5 to 7.

The upper part 2 is a plastics canopy having opposed parallel side arms 2d mounted to the diagonal strips 9b by pins 3 provided at about half-way down the strips. Catches 2b are integrally moulded along upper edge 2c of part 2 and engage underneath projections 9e on top strip 9a of the frame member 9 to retain the upper part 2 in a closed position (see FIGURE 5). Top strip 9a carries a centrally mounted, key-operated cylinder lock 10, the operation of which should be immediately obvious from the FIGURES. However, operation of the lock 10 not only provides for locking of the upper part 2 in the closed

position but also locks an optionally provided lower, plastics drawer 11 in a closed position in the case 1. Connected to the lock 10 is a spring-loaded rod 12, and operation of the lock from the angular orientation shown in FIGURES 5 and 6 (i.e. turning of the lock to the position shown in FIGURE 2) raises the bottom end of the rod above the top of the rear wall 11a.

FIGURES 5 and 6 show the bottom end of the rod overlapping said rear wall 11a, thus preventing the drawer 11 from being pulled out of the case 1. When the lock 10 is turned to the position as shown in FIGURE 2 the drawer 11 can be pulled out as shown in FIGURE 2 by utilising the integrally-moulded handle means 11b on the drawer front.

The operation of opening and closing the case 1 and display of the contents will now be described in further detail. Firstly, the front wall 4 consists of a steel plate having a flat front panel 4a and two opposed tapered wing panels 4b. The wing panels 4b overlap associated side walls 8, and are hinged thereto at a location towards the bottom of the wing panels about axis Y-Y (see FIGURE 3) by pins 13 (only one shown). An upper extension strip 4c is provided to the panel 4a and ends of the telescopic rails 7 are mounted to strip 4c in a manner which should be apparent from the drawings. The

rear ends of the telescopic rails 7 are mounted into holes H in mounting portions provided on the inside of the rear wall R of the case 1.

FIGURE 5 shows a sectional side view of the case 1 in the closed position and the position of the wing panels 4b in relation to the side walls 8 is shown in chain-dotted lines. Firstly the lock 10 must be turned by a key from the position shown in FIGURE 5 to the position shown in FIGURE 2. This allows the catches 2b to be disengaged from the projections 9a merely by pushing down on the edge 2c of the upper part 2 (due to the inherent resilience of the plastics material) in the direction of arrow A, adjacent the catches. Handle 14 mounted in a recessed portion of part 2 can be swung about axis Z-Z into a position in which it can be gripped and pulled whilst maintaining a downward pressure in direction of arrow A until the catches are disengaged from the projections 9a. Alternatively, the catch mechanism may be separately mounted onto the part 2.

To open the case 1, the handle 14 is pulled so that part 2 moves downwardly and forwardly in the direction of arrow X about axis X-X. This action gradually extends the telescopic rails 7 (since they are attached to the front wall 4) and the inner edge E of each wing panel 4b is engaged by the corner of an associated actuating portion 2¹d which is an integral part of the respective

side arm 2a of the part 2. Said actuating portion 2^{1d} turns with part 2 and urges the front wall 4 about axis Y-Y to a degree of inclination dependent upon the angle turned through of the part 2.

FIGURE 6 shows a position intermediate the fully open and fully closed position of the case. The front wall 4 continues to turn on axis Y-Y until the bottom edge 2a of part 2 engages the front panel 4a thereof. If preferred, it is possible to open the case without using the handle merely by gripping part 2 itself and moving it downwardly and forwardly. FIGURE 6 also shows that the drawer 11 can remain locked in place in the case, if desired, with the case open, merely by turning the lock 10 to its previous locked position.

As explained, the bottom edge 2a limits the angle of inclination of the front wall 4. However, it is possible to move the wall 4 to a slightly greater angle of inclination from that described by pulling directly on the extension strip 4c of the front wall 4 in the direction of arrow B (see FIGURE 2). Edge 2a moves upwards slightly to accommodate the increased angle of inclination but still acts as a stop therefor in the new angle of inclination.

In the fully open position, file covers 5 can, advantageously, be sifted through in a greater effective volume because of the telescopic extension of the rails 7 and the display of the contents of same is much more convenient. The drawer 11 can be opened or closed as desired and used as additional storage space.

The case 1 is closed merely by lifting the front of the upper part 2 and swinging it in the reverse direction (i.e. upwardly and backwards). The upper edge 2c of part 2 engages strip 4c of the front wall 4 and pushes it back to an upright position and the case is closed, thereby automatically returning the rails 7 to their unextended positions.

An alternative locking or catch mechanism C is shown in FIGURE 7 which is a detail of the left - hand corner of FIGURES 5 and 6. Such an alternative is particularly suitable where a lock 10 is not provided and thus where there is no drawer-locking rod 12. The operation of the alternative catch mechanism C should be apparent from FIGURE 7 since it is merely provided by the inherent resilience of the overlapping catching parts C₁, C₂ provided on the rear wall R and drawer 11 respectively.

Individual features of the case of the present invention, functions, method or combinations thereof may be patentably inventive, and the terminology used

throughout this specification should not be construed as unduly limiting. It is to be understood that the use of any particular term herein may extend to the use of any reasonable generally equivalent term and/or generic term where sensible.

The content of U.K. Patent Specification No. 8812050.6 is hereby incorporated by reference.

CLAIMS

1. A document case comprising an upper part swingable, from a closed position, downwardly and forwardly relative to a front wall of the case, to thereby open the case, the arrangement being such that said front wall is pivotable from a first position occupied when the case is closed to a second, outwardly inclined position, in order, in use, to display the contents of the case, when the case is open.
2. A case as claimed in Claim 1 in which the arrangement is such that the front wall is pivoted to said second position as said upper part is swung to open the case.
3. A case as claimed in Claim 1 or Claim 2 in which said upper part is arranged to support the front wall in said second position, or in another inclined position.
4. A case as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which said upper part is arranged to limit the angle of inclination of the front wall.
5. A case as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the upper part comprises a canopy with two opposed side arms pivotally mounted on the case, said arms being provided with actuating portions which urge

the front wall to an angle of inclination dependent upon the angle turned through by the upper part as it is swung downwardly and forwardly.

6. A case as claimed in Claim 5 in which said front wall comprises a front panel and tapered wing panels overlapping and parallel to side walls of the case, and engaged by associated actuating portions as the case is opened.

7. A case as claimed in Claim 6 in which said actuating portions comprise integral portions of the side arms which engage associated edges of the wing panels to push them outwardly as the case is opened.

8. A case as claimed in Claim 7 when dependent from Claim 4 in which the arrangement is such that the upper part can be turned until a bottom edge thereof engages the front wall to act as a stop to the angle of inclination thereof.

9. A case as claimed in any one of Claims 6 to 8 in which the wing panels are hingedly connected to the side walls towards the bottom thereof.

10. A case as claimed in any one of the preceding claims which is a filing receptacle.

11. A case as claimed in Claim 10 in which rail means is provided for a suspension filing system within the case.
12. A case as claimed in Claim 11 when dependent from Claim 2 in which the rail means is thereby extended as the front wall is pivoted to said second position.
13. A case as claimed in Claim 11 or Claim 12 in which the rail means is in the form of telescopic rails.
14. A case as claimed in any one of Claims 11 to 13 in which the rail means is attached to the front wall.
15. A case as claimed in any one of the preceding claims having a drawer.
16. A case as claimed in Claim 15 in which the drawer is at the bottom of the case.
17. A case as claimed in Claim 15 or Claim 16 in which said drawer is lockable in a closed position in the case.
18. A case as claimed in any one of the preceding claims which is provided with a lock.
19. A case as claimed in Claim 18 in which the lock is a key-operated lock.

20. A case as claimed in Claim 18 or 19 when dependent from Claim 17 in which actuation of the lock unlocks the drawer in addition to unlocking the case.

21. A case as claimed in Claim 20 in which the drawer is unlocked in addition to unlocking the case on a common action of the lock.

22. A document case substantially as herein described and illustrated with reference to FIGURES 1 to 6 of the accompanying drawings or substantially as modified with reference to FIGURE 7 of the accompanying drawings.

23. A filing receptacle comprising a hinged upper part movable between closed and open positions, said upper part being arranged to extend suspension rail means (preferably telescopic rails), for supporting files thereon, as said upper part is moved between the open and closed positions in order to display the files, said receptacle having a pivotable front wall movable from a first position generally parallel with a rear wall of the receptacle to an inclined position on said movement of the upper part from said closed position to said open position, said upper part being movable relative to the front wall.

Amendments to the claims have been filed as follows

24. A document case comprising an upper part swingable,
from a closed position, downwardly and forwardly relative
to a front wall of the case, to thereby open the case,
the arrangement being such that said front wall is
5 pivotable from a first position occupied when the case is
closed to a second, outwardly inclined position, in
order, in use, to display the contents of the case, when
the case is open and in which rail means is provided for
a suspension filing system within the case.

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